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Symposium to Create Yukon Research Centre of Excellence

WHITEHORSE – Over 70 representatives from universities, the federal and northern territories governments, the Yukon and First Nations governments and Yukon College officials will be at the Yukon College Whitehorse campus Feb. 12 to map out the next steps on how a Yukon Research Centre of Excellence might operate in Yukon.

The one-day symposium will be the first major meeting at which officials will come up with recommendations on how to establish and operate the proposed centre.

Environment Minister Dennis Fentie said the current vision calls for the proposed centre to focus on climate change adaptations.

"We see the proposed centre as an important partnership in our commitment to manage and adapt to the impacts of climate change on the lives of all Yukoners, and to work on solutions that will benefit northerners everywhere," Fentie said.

"Climate change has unique and profound consequences for all northern aboriginal people," Council of Yukon First Nations Grand Chief Andy Carvill said. "So it is imperative that they play a meaningful role in the location, development and operation of this important facility."

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Yukon College President Dr. Terry Weninger said he was pleased the collaborative initiative had resulted in a wide ranging and intense interest in the topic and the approach.

"This collaborative approach started in the initial planning stages with the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Government of Yukon and Yukon College and has evolved to a symposium where local and national participants have been invited to provide advice for the proposed research centre of excellence and the research agenda," Dr. Weninger said.

Those from across the country who have confirmed their attendance include representatives from Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia universities; federal, Nunavut and the Northwest

Territories departments, the Canadian Polar Commission, and the International Polar Year.

The one day meeting is co-hosted by Yukon College, the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon.

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